

Most people have uphill hopes and downhill habits.

Habit #3: Control my thoughts.

Wise thinking leads to right living. Stupid thinking leads to wrong living. (Ecclesiastes 10:2 MSG)

- ✓ Everything begins with a thought.
Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. (Romans 12:2 NLT)

- ✓ What we think determines how we feel.
Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things...and the God of peace be with you.
(Philippians 4:8-9)

- ✓ Our thoughts determine our destiny.
Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. (Romans 8:5-6 NLT)

Developing Habits in Your Thought-Life

1. Don't allow toxic stuff into your mind. Fill your mind with what is good!

2. Get off the hamster wheel of self-defeating, negative thought patterns.

3. Don't lock yourself in the prison of obsessive thinking.

4. Be self-aware of what is going on in your mind.

5. Stop believing sabotage.

Next Steps

Deeper Study

Read Psalm 37 slowly and carefully in several different translations throughout a week's time. Notice what it says to us about our emotions, the benefits of God's way, frustrations, God's faithfulness, the wisdom and security of a godly life, peace with God, and many more subjects central to life.

Why is managing our thought life so challenging? Take encouragement in this: the more you work at it, the better you'll get at it. Look through your notes from the sermon – what take-aways can you start utilizing in your life now? Start doing those things immediately - this week.

Our thoughts are largely comprised of what we feed on – what we put, or allow, into our minds. If you aren't already – start beginning the day from now on by taking into your mind Scripture and a devotional reading. Follow that up with thoughtful prayer. Ask God to be working in your life, heart, mind, and will; shaping you. Starting the day that way is a game changer for centering our thought life. Listen to things on the way to work that deepen your mind's awareness of God, rather than weakening it.

Discipleship Discussion Guide

What really jumped out at you in the sermon about our thought life?

What is something you want to change about your thought life, and what do you plan to do?

If you could describe what you want to be like in 10 years, what would you say about how you'd like your thought patterns to mature and be like 10 years from now?

Proverbs 2: 1-11 and verse 20 is one of many places the Scriptures talk about how we use our minds. What occurs to you as you read this passage?

Resources for this series:

Power of Habits – Charles Duhigg

Compound Effect – Darren Hardy

Atomic Habits – James Clear

Strengthening Your Grip – Charles Swindoll